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Addressing the Ecumenist Dance of Craig Truglia at the “Orthodox Christian Theology” YouTube Channel

By Subdeacon Nektarios, M.A.

In a YouTube post on his channel Orthodox Christian Theology, Craig Truglia issued yet another characteristic defense of World Orthodox ecumenism. In this particular statement, he sought to justify the recent article by the First Hierarch of the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese, which claimed that the Syriac Monophysites and the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch neither share in the sacraments—including the Eucharist—nor maintain official communion. Truglia, in his public commentary, attempts to minimize and distort the significance of the 1991 Synodal and Patriarchal Letter issued by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch.





Metropolitan Saba meeting with this 'Sister Church' the Syriac Orthodox Monophysites

That official document unmistakably declared mutual recognition between the Greek Orthodox and the Monophysite Syriac churches, referring to each other as “sister churches,” acknowledging each other’s sacraments as grace-filled—this, despite the Syriac Monophysites being ecumenically condemned by the Fourth Ecumenical Council. The agreement explicitly permits shared participation in the mysteries (i.e., sacraments), thus placing it in direct contradiction to the dogmatic and canonical boundaries set forth by the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. In an attempt to obscure the implications of this sacramental agreement—which is precisely what it is—Truglia tries to reduce the matter to mere administrative convenience, describing the Synodal and Patriarchal decision as a “‘trading’ of jurisdiction for worship and sacraments at specific locales when there was only an OO [Oriental Orthodox] or EO [Eastern Orthodox] clergyman present” [1].

As mentioned in my previous article, *A Critical Examination Concerning Metropolitan Saba of the Antiochian Archdiocese: Exposing His Ecumenist Lies*, this 1991 agreement was both synodally and patriarchally affirmed by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and the Monophysite Syrians. Truglia expects us to disregard the plain meaning and significance of this official agreement. In essence, he’s engaging in Orthodox “Patriarchsplaining” or “Synodsplaining”—attempting to reinterpret what the Patriarchate of Antioch has already clearly and officially stated, in order to spin his personal opinion into an official narrative and downplay the gravity of their apostasy. It’s no different from what Michael Lofton does when defending the heretical actions of the popes.

If we examine this Synodal and Patriarchal letter more closely, even in its simplest and most direct points, what can we take away from such a heretical document?

First, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch officially declared within the statement that they are “convinced that this direction was inspired by the Holy Spirit” [2].

Think about that for a moment. Use your rational mind, not emotional bias or blind loyalty to the institution. They are claiming that this heretical document was inspired by the Holy Spirit! In other words, the Patriarchate of Antioch officially declared this ecumenical betrayal to be Spirit-led, regardless of the definitive and universal anathematization issued by the Fourth Ecumenical Council.

Secondly, in this official statement, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch recognizes the Monophysites—who, again, were ecumenically anathematized by the Fourth Ecumenical Council—as an equal church to that of the Eastern Orthodox. It asserts that they are part of the Church and that their mysteries are grace-filled, despite their condemnation by the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. This mutual recognition is clearly affirmed in point three of the official statement, which reads:

“Both Churches shall refrain from accepting any faithful from one Church into the membership of the other, irrespective of all motivations or reasons” [3].

Do we ever truly think about the implications of such declarations, or do we simply react with blind defense of the so-called official church without critically analyzing what these statements actually mean?

In point six of the Synodal and Patriarchal letter, it states:

“6. If bishops of the two Churches participate at a holy baptism or funeral service, the one belonging to the Church of the baptized or deceased will preside. In case of a holy matrimony service, the bishop of the bridegroom’s Church will preside” [4].

This affirms that the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch recognizes Monophysite bishops and their sacraments—including baptism and marriage—as valid. It treats them as equals to Greek Orthodox clergy, all in direct contradiction to the decrees of the Fourth Ecumenical Council.

Points seven and eight introduce confusion and contradiction. Point seven says:

“7. The above-mentioned is not applicable to the concelebration in the Divine Liturgy” [5].

This appears to refer specifically to who presides at the concelebration, rather than forbidding the concelebration itself.

Point eight further states:

“What applies to bishops equally applies to the priests of both Churches” [6].

Then, in point nine, the text clearly affirms a form of Eucharistic communion. It states:

“9. In localities where there is only one priest, from either Church, he will celebrate services for the faithful of both Churches, including the Divine Liturgy, pastoral duties, and holy matrimony. He will keep an independent record for each Church and transmit that of the sister Church to its authorities” [6].

Finally, the most significant and revealing statement is in point eleven, which indisputably demonstrates Eucharistic communion between the two jurisdictions:

“11. If a bishop from one Church and a priest from the sister Church happen to concelebrate a service, the first will preside even when it is the priest’s parish” [7].

In the latter portion of Truglia's argument, he attempts to claim that the statements issued in the 1991 agreement have been quietly withdrawn by both jurisdictions. However, he concedes there are no public declarations confirming this, nor does he present any definitive evidence to substantiate the claim. This speculative assertion lacks any authoritative documentation and is, by his own admission, based on assumption rather than fact. Truglia then pivots to cite the case of the Moscow Patriarchate's 1969 Patriarchal and Synodal agreement establishing a form of communion with the heretical Roman Catholics. While Truglia correctly notes that this agreement has never been rescinded nor repented of by the Patriarchal Synod of the Moscow Patriarchate, he fails to recognize the dangerous precedent this sets: once heretical agreements are made and not formally repealed or renounced, they remain standing.

So, what is the Bottom-Line Up-Front takeaway from the 1991 Official Synodal and Patriarchal Document?

- The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, in its official ecclesiastical capacity, recognized the so-called Syriac Orthodox Church—also known historically as the Jacobites—as, in some manner, a constituent part of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.
- The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch formally acknowledged the sacraments of the Syriac Orthodox Church as grace-filled and legitimate, despite and in full defiance of the infallible, universal condemnation of Monophysitism declared by the Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon in 451 A.D.
- The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch officially endorsed the shared participation in the Holy Mysteries (i.e., Baptism, Matrimony, the Eucharist, etc.) between bishops, priests, and laity of both jurisdictions, again in direct contradiction to the anathemas and dogmatic boundaries established by the Fourth Ecumenical Council.

Craig Truglia, in his continued role as a propagandist for World Orthodoxy, would have his viewers believe that the 1991 agreement does not constitute actual communion between the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and the Syriac Monophysites. He bases this claim on a solitary statement by Metropolitan Saba of the Antiochian Archdiocese in America, asserting that the jurisdictions are not in communion.

But if Metropolitan Saba's statement truly reflects the official position of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, then why has the Patriarchal Synod, together with Patriarch John X, not issued a formal, unambiguous repudiation of the 1991 heretical agreement? Why has there been no public act of repentance—no confession before the Orthodox Christian world denouncing the betrayal of the Fourth Ecumenical Council?

The answer is simple and sobering: the Synod and Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch still believe in the contents of that document and continue to operate according to its principles.

This should come as no surprise to anyone paying attention. Consider the following facts:

- The Antiochian Patriarchate has never withdrawn from the World Council of Churches.
- It has never issued a formal retraction or repentance for its involvement in ecumenist agreements or interfaith initiatives.
- Metropolitan Saba himself has publicly participated in joint prayer events alongside Monophysite clergy—those anathematized by an Ecumenical Council—with no fear, no remorse, and no repentance.
- He has repeatedly prayed with these individuals, in direct violation of the Apostolic Canons, in full view of cameras and with no canonical consequences.

Why should he feel compelled to change or repent when media apologists with large followings, such as Truglia, are ready to rationalize every action, rewrite every narrative, and sanitize every compromise? These spin-doctors manufacture a steady stream of excuses, deflections, and semantic gymnastics to confuse the faithful and downplay the gravity of apostasy.

At what point does this cease to be tolerable? How much more evidence is required? How many more photo-ops, shared liturgical services, and joint prayers with anathematized heretics will be excused in the name of institutional loyalty?

There are only two reasons why someone might still fail to recognize the gravity of this scandal. First, they may be willfully dishonest—choosing to defend the institution for the institution's sake alone, regardless of the truth or the integrity of the Orthodox Faith.

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Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no salvation (Psalms 146:3)

References

[1] "Orthodox Christian Theology YouTube Statement," Orthodox Christian Theology (Craig Truglia), accessed May 3rd, 2025, <http://youtube.com/post/UgkxDxMElpOiLhhZm-Hwq860WcBn74hUv7ln?si=vOORceL67MvEmLug>

[2]. "Statement of the Orthodox Church of Antioch on the Theological Dialogue: On the Relations between the Eastern and Syrian Orthodox Churches," Syriac Orthodox Resources, accessed April 28th, 2025, <https://web.archive.org/web/20201112021105/https://syriacorthodoxresources.org/Ecumenism/19911112socrumorthstmt.html>

[3]. Ibid.

[4]. Ibid.

[5]. Ibid.

[6]. Ibid.

[7]. Ibid.